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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 004427

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR OES/SAT, OES/STC, EUR/ERA, STAS, EAP/J, AND
EUR/WE
DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS TO NASA/EXTERNAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL
SCIENCE FOUNDATION (JHUDSON), AND EST COLLECTIVE
DOE FOR OFFICE OF SCIENCE DIRECTOR RAY ORBACH
WHITE HOUSE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE SCIENCE ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OSCI](#) [TSPA](#) [ENRG](#) [TSPL](#) [TNGD](#) [TRGY](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPANISH ON ITER, EXTREMELY LARGE TELESCOPE
PROJECT, AND EXPANDING OFFICIAL SCIENCE COOPERATION

REF: MADRID 4116

[11.](#) (U) This is an action request for OES/SAT and OES/STC:
see paragraphs 5 and 6 (respectively).

[12.](#) (SBU) SUMMARY: Senior Spanish Science officials continue
to believe that France will ultimately cut a deal with Japan
that will bring the ITER to the French site along with
sufficient guarantees of a prominent Japanese
construction/operation role. A team from the Spanish Science
Ministry would like to visit the U.S. to pitch the Canary
Islands as a possible site for the "Extremely Large
Telescope" project. Spanish science officials believe we
could expand and/or highlight bilateral science cooperation
to help overcome recent bumps in the bilateral relationship
caused by Spain's spring decision to withdraw its troops from
Iraq. Embassy Madrid stands ready to facilitate expanded
science cooperation if there is interest from Washington
technical agencies. END SUMMARY.

[13.](#) (SBU) In a 90 minute November 12 meeting with ESTHOFF,
Spanish General Secretary (U/S equivalent) for Science and
Technology Policy Salvador Barbera Sandez and Director
General (A/S equivalent) for Technology Policy Carlos
Alejaldre Losilla pushed for expanded S and T cooperation
with the U.S., reiterated GOS support for the six-party ITER
framework, and requested to meet with "key U.S. players" on
the Extremely Large Telescope Project to push the Canary
Islands as a possible host site.

ITER

[14.](#) (SBU) Alejaldre, the GOS point person on ITER, said he
remained confident that France and Japan would nail down a
deal based on the Japanese "host/non-host" proposal that
would bring the ITER to France along with sufficient
guarantees of a prominent Japanese construction/operation
role. He said that while the two sides were haggling about
the "price," Spain would continue to push France to cut a
deal and leave behind any possible temptation toward pursuing
an EU-centric ITER without Japan and the U.S. Alejaldre said
he would fly to Paris on November 24 for meetings with French
officials prior to the November 25-6 meeting where a final EU
decision may be reached. ESTHOFF reiterated U.S. support for
the six-party framework and encouraged Alejaldre to continue
to push the French to come to terms with Japan.

EXTREMELY LARGE TELESCOPE

[15.](#) (SBU) Alejaldre said the Extremely Large Telescope
Project "had the potential to turn into another ITER."
(Note: We presume he meant a possible counterproductive
pissing contest between an EU candidate site and other
possible locations. End Note.) As a result, Alejaldre would
like to lead a delegation of Spanish S and T officials to the
U.S. to lay out Madrid's case for installing the Extremely
Large Telescope in Spain (most likely on the Canary Islands).
Alejaldre would like to meet and brief the "key U.S.
players" on this issue. He recognized that the U.S. might
have its own candidate site but thought it would be useful to
lay Spain's cards out on the table earlier rather than later.
ESTHOFF said he would obtain the contact details of the key
U.S. players on this project as well as the name of an
individual who could coordinate with Alejaldre's staff
regarding a possible visit to the U.S. Embassy requests
OES/SAT assistance in providing a response to Alejaldre.
Response may be emailed to ESTHOFF Ken Forder at
forderk@state.gov.

EXPANDED S AND T COOPERATION WITH U.S.

16. (SBU) Barbera underscored recent bilateral tensions over Spain's spring decision to withdraw its troops from Iraq and argued that highlighting and/or expanding bilateral S and T cooperation would be one excellent way to get the relationship back on track. Thinking aloud, he proposed a possible 2005 visit to the U.S. by the Spanish Education and Science Minister and/or some sort of U.S.-Spanish S and T symposium as two possible mechanisms to achieve that goal. Barbera wondered who in the USG would be an appropriate interlocutor to discuss such ideas. Alejaldre suggested either the office of White Office Science Advisor or DOE's Office of Science. ESTHOFF indicated he would request Washington guidance regarding whether there was interest in expanded bilateral S and T cooperation at this time, and if so, who might spearhead such an effort on the Washington side of the equation. Embassy requests OES/STC assistance in providing a response to Barbera. Response may be emailed to ESTHOFF Ken Forder at forderk@state.gov.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) Good news on ITER (if it is true). As reported in reftel, Spain continues to have a burr under its butt about France beating it out as the EU ITER candidate site and thus offers us opportunities to triangulate on this issue vis-a-vis Paris. We strongly recommend that appropriate U.S. authorities receive Alejaldre and his team to discuss Spain's pitch for the Extremely Large Telescope Project. Even if we have our own site in mind, we could at a minimum use the visit to glean interesting information regarding EU intentions. Barbera has clearly energized his minions to press ESTHOFF for a general effort to expand S and T cooperation. ESTHOFF has recently heard the same message from many others who work both under and alongside Barbera on these issues. The constant theme is that we need to highlight good news in the bilateral relationship and S and T cooperation offers an attractive way to do so. Whether we want to do this at this time has clear policy implications. Should appropriate Washington authorities be interested in any effort to either highlight or expand S and T cooperation, Embassy Madrid would appreciate the contact details of someone who could honcho the required inter-agency process on the Washington end.

ARGYROS